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NOTES AND NEWS.

THE laboratory of experimental psychology of Columbia College is established in four rooms, occupying the upper floor of the president's house. These include rooms for instruction and research, and a dark room for the study of vision. A collection of apparatus has been secured at a cost of about \$2,500, and this will be further increased during the present year. The liberal regulation recently adopted by the trustees makes it possible for men of science not connected with the college to use the laboratory and apparatus for special research.

— Mr. George W. Field of Johns Hopkins University has been appointed to the American table at the International Zoological Station at Naples for three months, beginning Sept. 1. The table is at present occupied by Professor Wilson of Columbia University. The Americans at the station in 1891 were Dr. C. W. Stiles, Mr. W. L. Russell, and Miss Julia Platt.

— Steps have been taken towards the organization of Alumni Associations of Johns Hopkins University in the North-west and on the Pacific Slope. Preliminary meetings were held on Feb. 22, at Madison, Wis., where nine graduates and fellows of the university, members of the faculty of the University of Wisconsin, were assembled, and at Berkeley, Cal., where eleven persons met. The graduates meeting at Madison were: C. H. Haskins (Ph.D., 1890), assistant professor of history; G. L. Hendrickson (A.B., 1887), professor of Latin; H. W. Hillyer (Ph.D., 1885), assistant professor of organic chemistry; W. H. Hobbs (Ph.D., 1888), assistant professor of mineralogy and metallurgy; C. F. Hodge (Ph.D., 1889), instructor in biology; J. Jastrow (Ph.D., 1886), professor of experimental psychology; H. B. Loomis (Ph.D., 1890), instructor in physics; F. J. Turner (Ph.D., 1890), professor in history; C. A. Van Velzer (fellow, 1878-81), professor of mathematics. The graduates meeting at Berkeley were: Henry Crew (Ph.D., 1887), Lick Observatory; F. G. Hubbard (Ph.D., 1887), instructor in English, University of California; A. C. Lawson (Ph.D., 1888), assistant professor of mineralogy and geology, University of California; F. Lengfeld (Ph.D., 1888), instructor in chemistry, University of California; W. H. Miller (A.B., 1888), instructor in mathematics, Leland Stanford, Jr. University; E. M. Pease (fellow, 1884-85), professor of Latin, Leland Stanford Jr. University; G. M. Richardson (Ph.D., 1890), assistant professor of chemistry, Leland Stanford, Jr. University; C. H. Shinn (A.B., 1884), Niles, Cal.; M. D. Stein (A.B., 1886), Oakland, Cal.; W. I. Stringham (Ph.D., 1880), professor of mathematics, University of California; H. A. Todd (Ph.D., 1885), professor of Romance languages, Leland Stanford, Jr. University.

— Until the present century the policy of Europe, in dealing with crime and pauperism, was the best possible if the object had been to propagate and increase them both. The States of the New World necessarily copied many of the methods of the old. Unfortunately, along with much that was true and wise, they copied and perpetuated many old blunders. But with the advance of modern thought, especially with the enormous widening of the sphere of scientific knowledge, have come new and better ways of dealing with the defective, the criminal, and the pauper. To spread abroad and make popular the better ways in charity and reform is the object of the National Conference of Charities and Correction, which meets annually in one or other of our great cities, and will hold its Nineteenth Annual Session in Denver, Col., next June. It combines the best philanthropy of all creeds and all shades of political opinion upon the broad platform of humanity. Its programme for the year has just been issued, and is an interesting paper, its topics covering many of the social problems of the time. The membership of this conference is unique. It has no salaried officers and no selfish benefit to offer to anyone, so its doors are open to all the world; whosoever will may come in, on a footing of the most perfect equality. The fact that you are interested in its work, makes you a member, and entitles you to a seat and a voice in its discussions. Anyone desiring further particulars as to reduced railroad fare, hotel accommodations, etc., may address Alexander Johnson, secretary, Indianapolis, Ind., who will send circulars and answer inquiries.

— During the past two years a large number of variegated plants have been examined with reference to the presence of parasitic fungi by Byron D. Halsted, New Brunswick, N.J., who presented a paper before the Torrey Botanical Club Feb. 9. Attention was first called to the subject by a study of the foliage of a variegated ash, which had its leaves badly spotted with a species of *Coniothyrium*, while ordinary ash trees were free from the same fungus. Some of the variegated plants, both of the hardy sorts and those grown under glass, have been badly infested with leaf blights. Of the former may be named the delicate and popular bedding plant called plantain lily (*Funkia undulata*, var. *variegata*), several sorts of variegated pelargoniums and alternantheras. Among the most affected of the tender plants of the variegated class may be mentioned the *Aspidistra lurida*, var. *variegata*, *Ficus elastica*, var. *variegata*, *Abutilon Thomsoni*, *Codiaeum*, sp. (crotons), *Dieffenbachia*, sp., *Hydrangea hortensis*, var. *variegata*, *Phrynum variegatum*, *Dracena*, sp., etc. There seems to be no question that the variegated leaves are more susceptible, and that likewise the etiolated parts are the ones first attacked. The absence of green in a leaf, from this it is to be inferred, is a source of weakness, and upon this account the etiolated tissue is less able to resist the attacks of the fungus germs. Speaking generally, a variegated plant lacks capacity for the best work, and the gardener, in propagating a variegation, no matter how it may have originated, is propagating a weakened plant in so far as it has its normal amount of chlorophyll reduced. The fact that some sorts of the self-blanced celery have been found more susceptible to blights and decay bears directly upon this point. It is a pity that so many of our choicest variegated plants blight easily; it is, however, natural that they should do so. Even a fungus parasite will take the line of least resistance.

— At the last meeting of the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Philadelphia a number of the amulets recently presented to the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania by Mrs. John Harrison, who collected them during her recent journey in the East, were exhibited. Among others was a small stamped metal hand with a Hebrew inscription, worn by Jewish boys in Cairo on their foreheads. The inscription reads: *Ben Pórath Jóséf*, "a young branch is Joseph" (Gen. xxii., 49), *Shaddai*, and "Jerusalem the Holy City." A green-stone talisman purchased at Jaffa bore an inscription in Arabic of Cufic type, reading "God is High." The hand gave rise to a discussion on the wide-spread use of the extended hand as a magical symbol. In Japan such a hand is frequently placed over the doorway as a charm, and its use in America was commented upon. The folk-lore collection comprising charms, games and a variety of objects in the University, receives constant accessions and is growing in interest.

— The *Bol. dell Instituto Geogr. Argentino*, Tomo xii. Cuad. v. y vi., contains a description of Tierra del Fuego by Dr. Polidoro A. Segers, who took part in an expedition in 1886, and since then has continued his observations during three consecutive years. The northern part of the island, explored by MM. Rousson and Willems, is covered with prairies, where no trees and few shrubs are to be found (see vol. vii., p. 586). To the south, however, of the line from Useless Bay to Cape Pefías the surface is clothed with forest, which gradually becomes more dense towards the south. Here the coast is more rugged and the shore is encumbered by rocks, harboring large numbers of sea fowl and a variety of molluscs. Fish also and seals are more abundant on the southern coasts. This difference in the animal kingdom causes a corresponding difference in the mode of life of the natives. Whereas in the north the Onas, or, according to Dr. Segers, Aonas, subsist on the guanaco and the *tucu-tucu*, a small rodent, the natives of the south, where these animals are seldom met with, are almost entirely dependent on the sea for their living. They catch seals with a decoy of seal skin stuffed with grass, which they draw through the water by a thong, imitating at the same time to great perfection the bellow of the animal. Birds they catch at night by torch-light, letting themselves down the cliffs by ropes of leather, and fish they take in nets made of sinews of the guanaco. In their dress and customs the southern Onas resemble their brethren of the north, with whom they are constantly at feud.

Their number, in consequence of frequent battles with their more numerous enemies, has been much reduced, and is now, probably, very small. They are very skilful in the use of the bow, and show some dexterity in the manufacture of arrow-heads of flint and glass and needles of bone, but they never make any improvements in their utensils and are utterly ignorant of art of the rude description generally found among savages. Tierra del Fuego is inhabited by six tribes of Onas, each of which speaks a particular dialect, though men of different tribes are able to converse together. Each man has his distinctive name, wherein the Onas differ from the Yaghan, who live on the Beagle Channel, and go out in their canoes to sell otter and seal skins to passing vessels.

— Among the most singular cats which have been introduced into Europe of late years are those known as the Siamese. They are coming into favor, and half a dozen old cats and several young ones in the kitten classes were exhibited last fall at the Crystal Palace show. The ground color of one was pale cream, slightly darker on the hind-quarters, the color of the extremities, that is to say, the muzzle, ears, and tail, and the four feet, being a very dark chocolate, approaching black.

— At a meeting of the board of directors of the American Association to Promote the Teaching of Speech to the Deaf, held at Washington, D. C., Jan. 18, it was decided to hold the annual summer meeting either at Manitou, Col., Lake George, N. Y., or at Northampton, Mass., and Mr. A. L. E. Crauter was appointed a committee to ascertain the relative advantages of these points. He reported to a meeting of the executive committee at the Parker House last week. The committee decided, after due deliberation, to hold the meeting from June 22 to July 1 inclusive, at Crosbyside Hotel, Lake George, N. Y. This will in no wise conflict with the proposed conference of principals and superintendents of deaf and dumb institutions in Colorado. At the meeting last week, Dr. A. Graham Bell presided. Among those present were Miss C. A. Yale, principal of the Clark Institution for the Deaf; Miss Sarah Fuller, principal of Horace Mann school, Boston; Prof. A. L. E. Crauter, principal of the Pennsylvania Institute for the Deaf, Philadelphia; Hon. John Hitz, superintendent of the Volta bureau, Washington, D. C., and others. The meeting adjourned subject to call of the president to hear the report of the committee of arrangements in regard to a programme.

— Mr. William Sowerby, the veteran and distinguished Secretary of the Royal Botanical Gardens, writes to the *British Medical Journal* the following note on his suggestion for adding to the number of alkaloid beverages by the introduction of coffee-tea: When walking in the Gardens of the Royal Botanical Society, Regent's Park, and noting the extent of the collection of living medicinal and economic plants of all climes and countries there brought together in one spot, it must have occurred to all of us how very small a number of plants, out of the vast store which Nature has provided, man has bound to his service, and the yet fewer he has taken the trouble to cultivate. During the march of the last half-century, in science, medicine, mechanics, steam, and electricity how little has been gained from Nature's stores. The artificial culture of cinchona is, perhaps, the most noted of the few. Again, any step in eating, drinking, dress, is so governed by habit or fashion that he must be a bold man who tries to turn the current. This is illustrated in tea drinking. Perhaps there is no one habit so universal; each people has its peculiar tea or closely allied beverage, and most of these have continued the same for many ages. In one it is cocoa, in others, coffee, and in many, tea; in a few special quarters of the globe nothing but *mate* is thought fit to drink, but in only one small district is coffee-leaf tea used. Now we all know that these beverages are found by man to be pleasant and agreeable to him by reason of their containing a peculiar principle called *theine*; but yet we do not always select for our use the part of the plant containing the largest percentage of *theine*, or cultivate the special plant with a view to afford us the most valuable part. For example, in coffee the leaves are said to contain 1.26 of *theine*, and the berries only 1.0 per cent, and yet over 110,000,000 of men use the berries, and only 2,000,000 the leaves of coffee, although 500,000,000 use the leaves of tea. Now the cultivation of coffee berries is very try-

ing, precarious, subject to attacks of blight and unfruitfulness; in fact it follows the general line that the produce of fruit by cultivation is far more open to accident than that of the leaves, and very probably good crops of coffee leaves could be obtained at small cost in countries and localities where it would be risky or even impossible to produce berries. Here is a case open to a vast variety of people to solve, for there can be no reason why coffee leaves may not become a valuable item of culture in our warmer colonies and many parts of the world. The one most difficult item to move is to create the demand. Once start the fashion for "five o'clock coffee-leaf tea," and the thing is done, and many a fortune made. As to the peculiar flavor of coffee-leaf tea much depends on the manipulation of the leaf after it is taken from the plant. At the Botanic Gardens a variety of flavors have by treatment been produced from leaves off one plant, the general flavor being a kind of combination of coffee and tea so as to get both in one cup.

— The *St. Petersburger Medicinische Wochenschrift* gives a résumé of a paper by A. S. Ignatovski on the cause of death by hanging. He refers the rapid loss of consciousness after suspension to the retarded or arrested circulation in the brain brought about by the increased intra-cranial blood pressure. The effect of this impediment to the circulation is the same as in cerebral anaemia, for in both the nutrition of the brain suffers. It is therefore not, as Leofman teaches, an insufficient supply of blood to the brain, due to compression of the carotids, which interferes with the functional activity of the brain, but compression of the capillaries by increase of the intra-cranial pressure, which has this effect, and which occurs whilst the supply of blood remains the same, or even increases.

— We learn from *Nature* that a prize is offered by Schnyder von Wartensee's Foundation, Zürich, for the solution of the following problems in the domain of physics. "As the numbers which represent the atomic heats of the elements still show very considerable divergences, the researches conducted by Professor H. F. Weber on boron, silex, and carbon, regarding the dependence of the specific heats upon the temperature, are to be extended to several other elements, prepared as pure as possible, and also to combinations or alloys of them. Further, the densities and the thermic coefficients of expansion of the substances investigated are to be ascertained as carefully as possible." The following are the conditions: the treatises handed in by competitors may be in German, French, or English, and must be sent in by Sept. 30, 1894. The examination of the treatises will be intrusted to a committee consisting of the following gentlemen: Professor Pernet, Zürich; Professor A. Hantzschi, Zürich; Professor E. Dorn, Halle-on-the-Saale; Professor J. Wislicenus, Leipzig; Professor E. Schär, Zürich, as member of the committee offering the prizes. The Prize Committee is empowered to award a first prize of two thousand francs, and minor prizes at its discretion to the amount of one thousand francs. The work to which the first prize is awarded is to be the property of Schnyder von Wartensee's Foundation, and arrangements will be made with the author regarding its publication. Every treatise sent in must have a motto on the title-page, and be accompanied with a sealed envelope bearing the same motto outside and containing the author's name. The treatises are to be sent to the following address: "An das Praesidium des Conventes der Stadtbibliothek, Zürich (betreffend Preisaufgabe der Stiftung von Schnyder von Wartensee für das Jahr, 1894)."

— John Wilson & Son, Cambridge, announce "Selections Illustrating Economic History Since the Seven Years' War," compiled by Benjamin Rand, Ph. D., assistant in philosophy, Harvard University. This is a second edition, revised and enlarged. The first edition of these selections was published as a text-book of required reading to accompany a course of lectures on economic history given at Harvard College. It was also adopted for a similar purpose by other American universities. A continued demand for the work has led to the preparation of the present edition. The design of the book has been to exhibit in a series of articles of permanent value different phases of economic thought, and to present in chronological order a narrative of some of the more important events and influences of modern economic history.